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THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY LIBRARY FROM 1942 TO 1952 WITH A SURVEY OF ITS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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PART I

EARLY HISTORY OF THE LIBRARY

The story of the activities of any institution, like the Library of the American Philosophical Society, even for one short decade, if it is to be at all adequate, must be projected against the background of its history. To do so in detail, however, would lead too far afield. Reference is therefore made to the "Brief History" in the Year Book, and to "The Library of the American Philosophical Society," by the Chairman, in The William and Mary Quarterly for January 1946.¹

Only the more significant features of the story, such as are essential to a correct understanding of the developments in the decade just past, are noted here.

The Library of the American Philosophical Society had its beginnings in colonial days, and, as the Library of the oldest scientific and learned society of the country, it has shared the fortunes and vicissitudes of that Society over a period of more than two hundred years. It is the product therefore not of a great collector or Maecenas, but of the interest and devotion of the officers and members—scientists and scholars—of a great Society, united, says the Charter, "for promoting useful knowledge."

Not until the early thirties of the present century did the Library obtain some degree of the financial strength so marvelously utilized in the promotion of scholarship by the great specialized libraries like the Henry E. Huntington, the John Carter Brown, the William L. Clements, and others. But if large private endowments were not the fashion in the Age of Enlightenment, an intense interest in science and learning was paramount, and the American Philosophical Society, like the Library itself, is today a living memorial to the spirit of inquiry and search for knowledge so characteristic of the eighteenth century.

In the spirit of the Renaissance and the tradition of Copernicus and Galileo, men eagerly espoused the Newtonian approach to the physical world. They turned to the study of nature and of man. Science and experimental philosophy became the vogue among the intellectuals of every country, even though they continued to give lip service to all branches of knowledge—Bacon’s "House of Solomon." Only giants like Alexander von Humboldt (cf. Cosmos) could still venture to treat all fields of knowledge. In recognition of this, scientists and scholars organized societies and academies, pooling their ideas and discoveries through correspondence and the exchange of publications.

Moreover, in the search for the laws of the universe and of man, as the eighteenth century envisaged them, they developed a strong belief not only in the unity of science and learning, but also in their universal, rather than their national character. Scientists were citizens of the world, and their desire to share ideas and discoveries was equalled only by their faith in the dynamic power of ideas when applied to the practical affairs of life. It was to this intellectual atmosphere, this search for knowledge by men singly and collectively, that the Library of the American Philosophical Society owed its inception and many of its early holdings.

FRANKLIN, FOUNDER AND PATRON

Great institutions do not, however, arise and grow without the initiative and efforts of some individual or group of individuals. The Library of the American Philosophical Society points with pride to that great printer, reader, and lover of books, Benjamin Franklin, as its founder. In 1727 he organized the Junto among a group of friends for study and discussion. A modest number of books was gradually assembled, and this early interest in a library was continued in the American Philosophical Society of 1743, which joined with the American Society in 1769 to

form The American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge. The agreement of union provided “That the Books, & all the Curiosities &c. of the former Societies be deposited in the Cabinet or elsewhere as the United Society shall direct.” To the Founders, the Library—a “collection of books”—and the exchange of publications were essentials in the promotion of knowledge.

Although absent in England at the time of the union of the two societies, in both of which he was a prominent member, Franklin was at once elected president of the Society, and thereafter successively till his death in 1790. During all this time, he not only procured many books for the Library, but zealously promoted the exchange of the Society’s Transactions, the first volume of which was published in 1771, for those of the academies and learned societies of Europe. This appears repeatedly in the early records of the Society. A minute of the Meeting of May 15, 1772, for example, speaks of twenty-seven copies sent to Franklin. Of these eighteen were for distribution among “learned Bodies” in seven different countries, and “9 Copies for Dr. Franklin,” doubtless for personal distribution (fig. 1).

1st The Compt of Buffons Natural History of Birds, with Coloured Plates from the Author—4 Vol. folio
2nd Three Volumes of the Transactions of the Royal Society of London, from the said Society—4to—
3rd Novi Commentarii societatis scientiarum gottingensis tomi III—4to—
4th Observations sur la physique sur l’histoire naturelle—et sur les arts & par l’Abbe Rozier—2 Vol. from the Author—4to—
5th Nouveaux memoires de l’academie Royale de sciences et belles lettres, Année 1770—Berlin—4to—
6th Astronomical Observations made at the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, in the years, 1765, 1766, 1767, 1768, & 1769, by the Revd Nevil Maskelyne B.D., from the author—folio—
7th A new Atlas of the Mundane system or Geography & Cosmography, by Samnl Dunn from the Author—folio—
8th Opuscules physiques et chemiques, par M. Lavoisier, de l’academie royale des sciences—8vo from the Author, with a letter to the Society—
9th An Account of the Northern Archipelago lately discovered by the Russians in the Seas of Kamscatka & Anadir, by I Von Stahlh—in—from Dr. Franklin 8vo—
10th Experimental enquiries into the lymphatic system by Wm. Hewson, F. R. S., from the Author—a pamphlet 4to—
11th Of the electric property of the Torpedo in a letter from John Walsh Esqre. to Dr. Franklin—a pamphlet 4to—
12th A Discourse on the different kinds of air, by Sir John Pringle Bart, from the Author—a pamphlet 4to—
13th Precis de recherches faites en france depuis l’année 1730, pour la determination des longitudes en mer pour la mesure artificelle du tems, par M. le Roy, from author—a pamphlet 4to—
14th Some additional observations on the Methods of Preserving seeds from foreign parts, for the benefit of the Amer Colonies, with an account of the Garden

FIG. 1.

The Address “prefix’d to each Volume designed for the above mentioned Institutions,” suggests an important aspect of the beginnings of the scientific and scholarly library which is in striking contrast with that of the subscription library of the Philadelphia Library Company (1731). While Franklin’s enterprise and initiative were largely responsible for both, his contribution to the Library of the Society clearly reveals the scientific objectives he had in mind for the latter. His great reputation and personal efforts largely account for the remarkable sets of serial publications by foreign academies and societies, which are today a conspicuous feature of our Library. Another characteristic of the accessions in these years is the predominance of works on natural history and science. This is strikingly illustrated in a minute of the Meeting of December 17, 1774, referring to a letter from Franklin, and the receipt of the following books:
at St Vincents, under the care of Dr. George Young, by John Ellis F. R. S.—

15th Bagley's advancement of the Arts—

Poetry, fiction, and even theology are conspicuous by their absence. On the other hand, works on theology and certain of the classics do appear later in the catalogues. Lighter reading, newspapers, like The Spectator and The Tattler, were apparently considered materials for the more popular subscription library of the Philadelphia Library Company, started by Franklin and his friends in 1731.

During the Revolution the Library was dispersed, the meetings of the Society having been interrupted several years before because of the controversies leading to the approaching conflict. "The members of the Philosophical Society," says a pencil minute of February 4, 1774,

partaking with their countrymen in the distress and labors brought upon their country were obliged to discontinue their meetings for some months until a mode of opposition to the said acts of Parliament was established, which they hope will restore the former Harmony and maintain a perpetual Union between Great Britain & the American colonies.

In the dispersion, part of the Library was removed for safety by the newly appointed Librarian, David Rittenhouse, "to his own house." Rittenhouse's keen interest in the Library, and the close integration of the Society's publications with it, appear in a letter of August 20, 1779, to Christian Mayer of Mannheim, professor of astronomy of the Palatinate, in which he wrote:

I am directed by the Philosophical Society to acknowledge your letter. . . . They likewise embrace this occasion to replace the volume of their Transactions which shared the fate of your more valuable papers.

This country having been the seat of war, our meetings have been interrupted for two years past, and the publication of a second volume thereby prevented; but as the Society is again revived, and we have materials for the purpose, it will not be much longer delayed.²

THE LIBRARY AND THE INCORPORATION OF THE SOCIETY

With the resumption of regular meetings and other activities after the Revolution, the Society was duly incorporated on the fifteenth of March, 1780. The Act of Incorporation, which Thomas Paine, then Clerk of the Assembly, and later a member of the Society, claims to have written,³ is eloquent on the benefits derived from "The Cultivation of Useful Knowledge" by "Societies of liberal and ingenious men uniting their labours, without regard to nation, sect or party, in one grand pursuit." As "One Body Corporate" the Society was declared to be capable in law to have, hold, receive and enjoy lands . . . gifts and bequests of what nature soever, in fee simple. . . . Provided that the amount of the clear yearly value of such real estate do not exceed the value of ten thousand bushels of good merchantable wheat.

In a spirit of optimism scarcely warranted by events in our times it adds further:

Whereas nations truly civilized (however unhappily at variance on other accounts) will never wage war with the arts and sciences and the common interests of humanity:

Be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall and may be lawful for the said Society . . . to correspond with learned Societies, as well as individual learned men, of any nation or country, upon matters merely belonging to the business of the said Society, such as the mutual communications of their discoveries and Proceedings in philosophy and science; the procuring of books, apparatus, natural curiosities, and such other articles of intelligence as are usually exchanged between learned bodies for furthering their common pursuits. . . .

"I saw with Pleasure," wrote John Adams from Amsterdam on September 5, 1780, "the Revival of the American Philosophical Society at Philadelphia, and the establishment of an Academy of Arts and Sciences at Boston;—in a new Country, and a young Society, such Institutions are perhaps more useful and necessary, than in older nations . . . Science and Literature are of no Party or Nation. They belong to the Great Commonwealth of Mankind."

With the publication of the second volume of the Transactions in 1786, Franklin, Vaughan, and Hopkinson were appointed a committee to forward the sale, "and send, in donations, any number not exceeding twenty copies, to such societies and particular persons in Europe as they shall think


³ Paine's claim should be considered in connection with the appointment by the Society at its meeting on December 17, 1779, of a committee of three of its members—Smith, Duffield, and Biddle—to prepare "A plan for incorporating the Society," and the Minute of Feb. 25, 1780, that the "Bill of incorporation was read."
entitled to this respect." As in the case of the first volume, a wide distribution abroad resulted; a number of papers being translated and printed separately in European journals.

The Library is especially mentioned in the preamble of the Act of March 28, 1785, by which the General Assembly of Pennsylvania granted to the Society "a lot of ground suitable and convenient for erecting a hall and other buildings for their accommodation" on State House Square; it being "reported to us . . . that they should have a public hall, library and other accommodations . . . ."

Funds for the Hall were raised with some difficulty, Franklin coming to the rescue with a second £100 and a loan of £500 to "put the roof on." A modest but beautiful building, in harmony with the colonial architecture of Independence Hall and the rest of the State House Square group of buildings was erected during the stirring times in Philadelphia from 1786 to 1789. In November 1789 the Society met for the first time in its own building—Philosophical Hall—which has been its home ever since (fig. 2).

Two years later, on February 17, 1792, the Society ordered that a complete Catalogue of all the Books, Instruments, Models, & specimens of Natural History, belonging to the Society, be made by the Curators, and that the Catalogue of the Books be printed in a convenient Pamphlet . . .

On July 15, 1796, after the death of Rittenhouse, Charles Willson Peale, "one of the Curators, laid before the Society the draught of a catalogue of the books belonging to the Society."

The vicissitudes of catalogue-making that arose from the mandate of the Society to its curators are of considerable interest but cannot be told here. Until recently the manuscript catalogue of 1799 by Dr. Nicholas Collin was supposed to have been the first catalogue of the Society's Library and the only one before 1800. In my research a decade ago on the beginnings of the Library, however, two earlier ones with accompanying notes and memoranda were discovered among the unclassified papers of the Society (figs. 3 and 4). When studied in relation to Collin's catalogue, they furnish interesting data on the successive acquisitions of a Library of a scientific and learned society as its holdings were being built up in the late eighteenth century.

Evidence of the valuation of the Library at the time Collin was preparing the catalogue is seen in a minute of December 15, 1797, in connection with the report of the Committee on Insurance: "Library and Hall . . . insured with the Insur-
ance Company of North America for $1200 and $4000 respectively.” If the Library was insured as much below its actual value as the Hall, the appraisal of $1200 was obviously very low. In any case the relative valuation thirty-seven years later was very different. According to a minute of January 17, 1834, additional insurance was placed as follows: “Building now $5000, the rest, $15,000.” The amusing and somewhat cryptic note by the copyist, reproduced below, supplies a lighter touch to the learned title entered on the large folio pages of the 1814 catalogue (fig. 5).

Donations and exchanges were the principal source of acquisitions. Purchases were made with great discrimination and, as in the case of Muhlenberg’s Herbarium, mainly by subscription from members. Funds were low. Even books from Franklin’s own library aroused no enthusiasm. Many of Franklin’s books were sold at auction by Dufief of Philadelphia in 1801 and 1803. The Society’s own response in the absence of an adequate book fund was unfortunately not what subsequent events in the Americana market would have suggested. However, the purchases were not inconsiderable, sufficient to serve as a nucleus for what has since become the largest single group of books from Franklin’s personal library.5

The entries in the minutes reflect the low ebb at the sale, in the appraisal of Franklin’s library. At the meeting of October 1, 1801, for example, the “Committee reported Books purchased from

Franklin’s library, $107.62.” The list with the prices paid for the Franklin books procured for this modest sum covers two pages. The cost of individual items, which today are high-priced Americana in their own right, quite apart from being Frankliniana, ranged from $.37-1/2 to $2.00. A month later the Library bought “More books from Franklin’s Library”—fourteen for $9.00, among them William Penn’s letter to the Committee of Free Society of Traders, published in London in 1683.

Unhappily no better recognition of the significance of Jefferson’s library marked the Library’s action thirty years later. On December 2, 1831, Du Ponceau, Meredith, and Ord were appointed a committee to purchase books for the Society at the sale of Jefferson’s library. The net results, as recorded in a laconic minute of a later meeting, were: “Books amounting to $8.40 reported purchased from Jefferson’s Library.” Sufficiently cautious, if incredible in these days! As in the case of Frankliniana, the Library has since acquired a considerable collection of Jeffersoniana, especially as they relate to Jefferson’s associations with the Society.

JEFFERSON—NATIONAL AND HISTORICAL INTERESTS

If Franklin was the principal benefactor of the Library in its early years, Jefferson became its great patron in the second, or national period of its history. While president of the Society, from January 6, 1797, to November 23, 1814, and for some years thereafter, Jefferson maintained a lively concern in its affairs, often presiding at its meetings and, when away, sending manuscripts, books, coins, and other objects, many of which have since become almost priceless. In friendly cooperation with Peale, Vaughan, Du Ponceau, and others, Jefferson looked upon the Library of the Philosophical Society as the logical depository for such material.

A special committee was created “to collect information respecting the past and present state of this country,” composed of Thomas Jefferson, President, and six others. The first paragraph of a circular letter addressed to persons likely to advance the objectives of the committee, reads:

The American Philosophical Society have always considered the antiquities, changes, and present state of their own country as primary object of their research; and with a view to facilitate such discoveries, a permanent committee has been established. . . .

Writing to John Vaughan, on May 4, 1806, in regard to a box of instruments, Jefferson said: “I beg leave to deposit it with the Philosophical society with whom it will have the best chance of becoming useful.” Other letters speak of manuscripts and books on all conceivable subjects, from Indian languages to a work on “The raising of Sheep, Especially Merinos.” Among Jefferson treasures of the Library, next in importance to the Draft of the Declaration of Independence in Jefferson’s hand, is the gift copy of Notes on the State of Virginia by Jefferson, with the following letter of presentation:

To J. Vaughan esq.  
Washington, May 2, 1805  

Dear Sir,  

In your letter of Nov. 16 you express a desire to obtain for the Philosophical society an early edition of Notes on Virginia. I found, when lately at Monticello, a single copy remaining of the original edition printed at Paris, the only one almost perfectly correct, & which never was sold, a few copies only having been printed & given to my friends. I have put this into a box addressed to Mr. Peale and gone round by sea, by Capt. Hand, for the use of the society.

Some of the Library’s most valuable collections, like its early vocabularies and grammars of Indian languages, the Michaux Journal, the Lewis and Clark Journals, the Westover Byrd Journals of the North Carolina Boundary Dispute, and many incidental works and objects, came to it through Jefferson’s wide interests and contacts.

Matters of historical and national import, especially things American, attracted him, and so

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7 Amer. Philos. Soc. Archives.
8 Ibid.
came more and more into evidence in the life and activities of the Society and its Library. In a letter of January 22, 1816, two years after his retirement from the Presidency of the Society, he wrote to Du Ponceau:

I learn with much satisfaction the enlargement by the Philosophical society of the scope of their institution, by the establishment of a standing committee for History, the moral sciences and general literature. I have always thought that we were too much confined in practice to the Natural and Mathematical departments. The Committee will become a depository for many original MS, many loose sheets, of no use by themselves and in the hands of the holder, but of great value when brought into a general depository open to the use of the future historian or literary enquirer.

He then tells of sending a geographical and statistical account in manuscript of the Creek and Muscogee Indians and country "by Col. Hawkins who has lived among them as agent now upwards of 20 years." Of especial interest, in view of the Library's acquisition later, is the concluding paragraph of the letter in which he tells of the Westover Byrd Journals, the manuscript journal of the Commissioners of 1728 on the North Carolina boundary, supposedly in the possession of the Westover family and written by their ancestor Doctor Byrd, one of the commissioners.

This trend toward historical and national matters in the development of the Library was not, as has just been suggested, an isolated phenomenon. It was a phase of the intellectual life of the time, and is illustrated further by the founding of our earliest state historical societies—the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1791, the New York Historical Society in 1809, the Antiquarian Society of America in 1819, and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1824. The last named owes its origin largely to the members of the Historical and Literary Committee of the American Philosophical Society.

Whether to regard this youthful daughter, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, with its magnificent collection, as a sign of virility of the parent society, or as evidence of a divergent interest, which did not find sympathetic reaction among the members of the American Philosophical Society, need not concern us here. More important is the fact that it stimulated the Library's interest in the subjects which the Society and the Literary Committee sponsored. No one saw and felt this new trend more clearly than the seer of Monticello, and under his influence the collection and conservation of the records of the nation's history—national, state, and local—thenceforward found an honored place side by side with the acquisitions in other fields. This was accentuated not a little by the fact that in the fields of science too there was a decided shift of interest to American subjects in these years.

The generation of American scientists that followed Franklin, Rittenhouse, and the Jefferson of younger days turned to American aspects of their subjects. Hence while the older Jefferson asserted the independence of the United States in the political sphere by the Embargo Acts and the War of 1812, and James Monroe proclaimed the independence of all the Americas in 1823, scientists were doing the same thing in their respective fields, despite the fact that science is pre-eminently supranational and cosmopolitan. The very title of William Maclure's pioneer study, "Observations on the Geology of the United States explanatory of a Geological Map" is suggestive. Read before the Society on January 20, 1809, and published in the Transactions at the time, it was republished eight years later with considerable new data, on the recommendation of the special committee of the Society to whom it was referred. The paper started a wide interest in the geology of the United States which soon bore fruit in the organization of the American Geological Society in 1819, state geological societies, and the state geological surveys of the following decades. In the field of ornithology, the father of that science in America, Alexander Wilson, humorously reminded men that Buffon's amazing theory of a degenerate animal life "in this up-start country" would raise the question "whether the ka-te dids of America were not originally nightingales of the Old World." The work of Rafinesque and Mühlenberg in botany, Morton in medicine, and that of other representatives of science in the years when the study of natural history in America expanded with such amazing rapidity, all manifest the same spirit of independence.

That the administration of the Library in the following decades reflected the influence of these new forces was to be expected. The Historical

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and Literary Committee referred to above, was particularly active. Foremost among the members of the committee were Peter S. Du Ponceau, George Ord, and John Vaughan, and the unusual activity of the Library during the next three decades is to be attributed largely to them. As corresponding secretary of the Committee, and later as president of the Society from 1828 to 1844, Du Ponceau stimulated an extensive correspondence on many subjects, especially on American native languages, philology, and linguistics in general. Through his friendship with Heckewelder, also a member of the committee, valuable manuscripts on Indian languages were added to those acquired during the years of Jefferson's activities. The acquisition of books and materials on the scientific interests of the Library were the particular concern of George Ord, the ornithologist and ardent champion of Alexander Wilson in the Wilson-Audubon controversy. Long before he succeeded Vaughan as Librarian in 1842 he was commissioned to purchase books in London and Paris on the Library's account. Some valuable acquisitions were made and an interesting correspondence upon the subject developed.

But it is to John Vaughan, Librarian from 1802 to 1841, that particular credit is due for the growth of the Library as a whole during these years. His devotion to it stimulated the interest and support of others. He kept a catalogue of books "constantly on the table," and to guide the Society in its occasional purchases the members were "recommended to throw desirable titles into a Lion's Mouth to be provided by the Librarian." Several months later the "lion's mouth" was "reported ready for use." Quite apart from such details, however, Vaughan by his correspondence and business and social contacts stimulated an interest in the Library, which led to numerous gifts. Among these the large collection of Franklin papers presented to the Library by the Fox family in 1840 was of first-rate importance.

This great gift of Frankliniana—letters, papers, broadsides, and imprints—secured through the friendly cooperation of Jared Sparks, lifted the Society at one stroke to the rank of a prominent archival depository for the colonial period of American history. Almost automatically it led to the adoption of a policy for the acquisition of other Frankliniana, which in subsequent years gradually established the Library as the foremost custodian of Franklin's letters and papers. The gift also illustrated the response of the Library to the broader trends in the thirties and forties of the last century, marked by the adoption of the policy by the Library of Congress to acquire and conserve the papers of the nation's leaders—of Washington in 1834, Jefferson in 1848, Madison in 1836 and 1848, Hamilton and Monroe in 1849, and the diplomatic writings of Franklin in later years when the policy was fully established.

THE SMITHSONIAN ERA AND SPECIALIZATION

In the years that followed, the Library encountered the difficulties that confronted most libraries of the learned societies of the period. Money and support turned to the rapidly expanding libraries of colleges, universities, and state historical societies. As time went on, these institutions also absorbed more and more of the time of the scientists and scholars who, in the days of Franklin and Jefferson, found in the Society and its Library a forum for discussion and the exchange of ideas. In the Library, as in the Society generally, there was a decided reaction in favor of science, especially towards geology and its allied fields. Hutton's thesis that rocks are uplifted, Maclure's Observations, and Agassiz's discovery of the ice age made geology the fashion before Darwin pointed the way to a still broader outlook. The activities of the Smithsonian Institution (1846), also founded "for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men," illustrate the movement away from philosophical societies of the older type. While the scientists did not withdraw from the Society, their interests shifted more and more to the Smithsonian and to organizations more highly specialized as to subjects. The age of specialization had arrived. Within the Society the decades from 1850 to 1890 might not inappropriately be called the Smithsonian era of the Library. They are marked by a vigorous revival of the interest in earth sciences, natural history, American native languages, and archaeology. In 1848 C. B. Trego, a geologist well known in state and municipal councils, succeeded Ord as Librarian. He was followed in 1858 by a fellow geologist, J. Peter Lesley, who continued in office till 1885. Lesley's devotion to geology did not

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13 George Ord's term as Librarian, from January 1842 to January 1848, marks a rather stormy period towards which the somewhat irascible Mr. Ord contributed not a little. The most serious difficulty arose from the decision of the Society to sell the Hall to the City and move to the Philadelphia Museum.

14 Minutes for October 19, 1804.
prevent him from starting the Library’s card catalogue and preparing the second printed catalogue for publication. His papers, presented to the Library several years ago, like those of Benjamin Smith Lyman, are of especial interest on the outlook of this period. The former’s role, with that of other members of the Society, in the organization of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1863 suggests the strength of the movement towards scientific interests.

Henry Phillips, Jr., Librarian from 1885 to 1895, was a distinguished linguist and archaeologist. He carried on the trend, but with a slightly different emphasis, by reviving the interest so strongly manifested in American Indian languages by Jefferson, Du Ponceau, and others. At his death he bequeathed to the Library his residuary estate, which was considerably augmented later by other members of the family. Quite recently, questions of policy in regard to the expenditure of the income of the Phillips Fund led to the appointment of a Special Committee on American Linguistics and Archaeology, and the adoption by the Library of a definite program for research and acquisitions in these fields.

At the turn of the century a laudable effort was made by the Librarian, I. Minis Hays, and a small group of the Library Committee to edit and calendar some of the Library’s more important collections. Of the publications that followed, the Calendar of the Papers of Benjamin Franklin in the Library of the American Philosophical Society in five octavo volumes, published in connection with the two-hundredth anniversary of Franklin’s birth, merits especial attention. Entirely in line with the accepted procedure in historiography abroad, the Calendar not only drew attention to the Society’s Frankliniana, but supplied an initial guide to students of Franklin. Badly in need of revision, and the addition of a supplement to cover accessions during the fifty years since its appearance, it is still in constant use.

Fig. 6. Philosophical Hall with the incongruous third story addition of 1890.

Fig. 7. The Library and its new quarters at the turn of the century.

MARKING TIME—SOCIETY REORGANIZATION

Meanwhile, adequate means, as well as a positive policy for new acquisitions, were lacking, and the “lion’s mouth” of Vaughan’s time was not given much attention. Funds were meager; purchase of books and manuscripts fell to a minimum. On the other hand, the flow of exchanges, especially of serials, continued, flooding the limited capacity of the Library and Philosophical Hall. In desperation the Society decided to enlarge the Hall, and in 1890 a third story was superimposed to accommodate the Library (fig. 6). New shelving and other improvements were added. But even this soon proved inadequate, and many books had to be stored elsewhere to relieve the overcrowding (fig. 7). Something more radical had to be done, and the plight of the Library was in part at least a reason for the ill-advised campaign to remove the Library and Society, body and soul, from their charming colonial home on Independence Square to a site on the new Parkway.15

15 A plea for the American Philosophical Society and its need for a new building to be known as “Franklin House,” Phila., 1913.
The response to the plan for the new building, the "Palace on the Parkway," though generous, was inadequate, till a second campaign brought subscriptions to about a million dollars. By that time, however, opposition to removal was so strong that the entire plan was abandoned in 1931, and the Society decided to remain in its Hall on Independence Square, made sacred by so many great associations.

A year later the Society found its Maecenas in Dr. Richard A. F. Penrose, Jr., one of its distinguished and active members. He bequeathed to the Society one half of his residuary estate, approximately four million dollars, as an endowment fund. Together with the other funds of the Society, this provided the basis for much more progressive and constructive policies not only for the Library, but even more so for research and for publication.

Confronted by the challenge and responsibility arising from the trusteeship of large funds, the Society undertook a searching analysis of its status and activities. The outcome was a vigorous reaffirmation of faith in the Society and its objectives, a thorough revision of the laws, and, in recognition of the broad base of the Society's interests, the reorganization of the membership into four classes: I. Mathematical and Physical Sciences; II. Geological and Biological Sciences; III. Social Sciences; IV. Humanities.

Meanwhile, the Library, having completely outgrown its quarters on the third floor of Philosophical Hall, was, in 1934, removed to the Drexel Building across Fifth Street. The main collections were installed in the former quarters of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange, with two improvised vaults, on the second floor of the big office building. After the physical installation and adjustments, the entire second floor of the east wing, with four additional rooms on the third floor, were occupied. As a result of weeding, two rooms were given up later. In 1936, the large collection of Frankliniana was purchased from the Bache family. This involved problems of processing and cataloging which taxed the capacity of the small staff for a long time. Simultaneously the beginnings were made on a study of the Society's own archives, an important matter which Dr. Sioussat, then Chairman of the Library Committee, had much at heart.

For detailed accounts of these activities see the reports of the standing committees in the Year Book of the Society, published annually since 1937.

PART II

THE LIBRARY FROM 1942 TO 1952

SPECIALIZATION AND OBJECTIVES

The transfer of the Library to its new quarters, and the purchase of the Bache Collection had aroused a lively interest in the Library among the members of the Society and a decidedly critical attitude manifested itself in some quarters. Reference was frequently made to its failure to attract readers, to its unrelated holdings, its haphazard acquisitions, and the absence of coordination with other libraries in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. Some seriously questioned the advisability of the Society continuing to maintain its Library.

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY

In the belief that much of the criticism arose from a lack of knowledge of the Library's history and the intrinsic value of its holdings, President Morris, in April 1939, appointed a Special Committee to make a thorough study and appraisal of the Library. The Committee, composed of the late Max Farrand, Chairman, Harry M. Lydenberg, Harlow Shapley, and St. George L. Sioussat, set to work promptly and with rare competence. Within a year, the Chairman submitted his Report. After a good deal of discussion, both by the Council and the generality, its findings were formally approved by the Society in Executive Session on April 25, 1941.

The recommendation of the Committee in favor of the continuation of the Library was emphatic:

The ownership of such treasures entails a responsibility for their preservation and care, and an obligation to make them available for use. The American Philosophical Society owes it to itself, to the community, to the United States and to the world at large, to preserve its Library and to make its contents known. To the Special Committee, accordingly, the essential question was, not the maintenance of the Library, but how economically and productively it is managed.

In general the Report suggested greater specialization, a thorough review of holdings, especially of exchanges, and the adoption of long-range objectives on the basis of the peculiar conditions under which the Library had grown. First, it proposed the careful selection of special...
fields in which the Library already had a preferred interest, and which it could "cultivate even more rigidly than in the past . . . to a point of superiority"; second, a planned program to build up the holdings in the particular fields selected; third, the elimination of unrelated holdings; fourth, the coordination of the Library's holdings and accessions with those of other libraries of metropolitan Philadelphia; fifth, an active policy to stimulate the use of the Library—"to make its contents known"; and sixth, a consideration of "the possibilities of a separate building," commensurate with the dignity of the Society, and adequate for the needs of the Library.

Further study of the situation along the lines of the Report was referred to the Committee on Library, and by it, to the Librarian and the Staff. At the annual meeting in April, 1942, the writer was appointed Librarian by the Council and the Society, and, at the request of President Conklin, assumed the Chairmanship of the Committee on Library as a logical step toward implementing the Report and the administration of the Library in general.

At the same time the membership of the Committee on Library was somewhat expanded, bringing to its deliberations an extraordinary wealth of experience and talent, not in library affairs alone, but also in several major fields of the Library's interests.18

Although much more complicated than was at first apparent, the task proved to be extremely interesting and, as the work progressed, presented quite unexpected potentialities. On the one hand were the accumulated results of two hundred years of growth, somewhat haphazard it is true, but rich in associations with great personalities and events; on the other, the challenge of the present in the midst of a great cultural renaissance here in historic Philadelphia. To this was now also added the assurance of reasonable financial support, and the cooperation of scholars and specialists among the Society's members.

The activities of the Library during the past decade therefore reflect much more than the usual library routine.19 They involved a thorough study and overhauling of the holdings, the development of a program of accessions in accord with new and more clearly defined objectives, and the constructive use of the unique resources at the command of the Society to foster the use of the Library "for promoting useful knowledge."

Progress toward the realization of the proposals made by the Special Committee under the impact of these rather unexpected forces can be best shown by a brief survey of several of the major fields which seemed peculiarly suited for special development, such as: Frankliniana; Colonial and Revolutionary History; the History of Science in America; American Indian Languages, Archaeology and Ethnology; and Pamphlets, Broadsides, and Rare Books related to these and other subjects. Progress in building up the holdings in these fields is fairly typical of the Library's activities during the past decade. At the same time it also reveals the continuation of the trend started by Jefferson of giving special consideration to historical materials. In passing, reference should be made to the Society's own archives, minutes, special reports, letter books, communications, records of accessions and service. While these are preserved with scrupulous care, steps begun some years ago to analyze and calendar them have been temporarily discontinued.

FIELDS OF INTEREST

The selection of the fields which the Library could develop with confidence was not only indispensable, but obviously a first requisite. It was soon recognized, however, that this was both complicated and difficult. Many factors, quite apart from the Library's own holdings and traditions, had to be considered. Hence, as the study proceeded, it became more and more evident that this particular phase of the program should not be determined on hard and fast lines, but be left more or less flexible, with tentative rather than final decisions in cases of reasonable doubt. On the other hand, fields on which there was a consensus of opinion as to their being capable of cultivation "to a point of superiority," or possessed of intrinsic and association significance, were definitely adopted for intensive development. Among these


19 The details of the story of the Library during the decade here under discussion are found in the manuscript Minutes of the Committee on Library, the correspondence by the librarians, and the articles and reports published from time to time in the Library Bulletin and the Year Book.
the life and works of the Founder obviously met every criterion for selection. From the first, Frankliniana were given a priority rating.

1. FRANKLINIANA

First among these were, of course, Franklin's own writings, particularly his correspondence. In these, the Library had already a unique and vital interest. The large group of Franklin Papers, presented to the Society in 1840 by the Fox family, was greatly increased nearly a century later (1936) by the acquisition of a collection of over 1,100 items from the Bache family, in whose custody, as direct descendants of Franklin, they had remained from colonial times. The addition of many other individual items, including rare books and pamphlets by Franklin himself, had placed the Library of the Society in the front rank of custodians of Frankliniana. Moreover, since his career touched upon so many aspects of his era—political, economic, and cultural—it seemed imperative to extend rather than to contract horizons even in this field.

With these things in mind, the Committee early endorsed a vigorous policy of acquisition, under which more than a dozen other Franklin collections and many priceless individual items have been acquired.

1. The Franklin-Mecom Correspondence. Outstanding among the early acquisitions of Frankliniana in the decade just passed is Franklin's correspondence with his favorite sister, Jane Mecom (1944). Added to the letters of Jane to her brother, which the Library had acquired before, these constitute a remarkable correspondence over a period of nearly half a century, in which Franklin unburdened his mind to his discreet sister, not only on family matters, but on innumerable subjects that occupied him at the time of writing.

2. The Franklin-Jackson Correspondence. Quite different in character is Franklin's correspondence with the "omniscient" Richard Jackson, who acted as Pennsylvania's colonial agent in Franklin's absence from England from 1762 to 1767. Before our acquisition of this group of letters (1945) their existence was hardly suspected, despite the fact that they are of unusual significance in the history of the relations between the colonies and the mother country. Written to a member of the House of Commons, the man whom Franklin described as "a gentleman said to be one of the best pens in England," the letters reveal Franklin's fine epistolary style at its best.

3. Franklin's Correspondence with Catherine Ray Greene (1946). Here a quite different side of "the many sided Franklin" appears, and the publication of this correspondence by the Society, with the two other groups just mentioned, constituted a very worthy contribution to Franklin historiography.

4. The Franklin-Hall Papers, consisting of account and letter books, and 79 letters from William Strahan to David and William Hall, 1745–1775, (obtained in 1946) require no comment.

5. The many important items acquired at the auction of the residue of Franklin materials still in the possession of the Bache family (1947).

6. The most recent addition (1952) of Franklin's Letters to Madame Brillon de Jouy written during his Passy days. These highly prized letters had been the object of Professor Chinard's envy for years. Most of Madame Brillon's letters had come to the Library in Franklin's Papers, while a few were acquired as fugitive items later. But Franklin's own had disappeared. Finally, after the urgent solicitations of the Chairman, they were retrieved by Philip H. Rosenbach, donor of the Shippen Papers (December 1952), and offered to the Library at cost.

7. To these different collections of Franklin's writings have been added a great many individual items—letters, imprints, rare books, and the complete file of Affaires de l'Angleterre et de l'Amérique, the important journal used by Franklin in his propaganda efforts in France. Some, like the original Instructions of George III to Richard Oswald to negotiate peace in 1782, are unique, while others, like Franklin's personal copy of the Book of Constitutions, bound in red morocco with his coat of arms, is one of two surviving copies of this de luxe edition of a work that exercised a large and continued influence on constitution-making in Europe from the French Revolution to 1848. While acquisitions in this category are usually fugitive items rescued from the danger of being dispersed or lost, they are, as in the case just mentioned, important additions to the Library's Collection of Great Books.

8. Another group which cannot be definitely classed as Frankliniana, but which nevertheless contains much related matter, is the collection of papers and letters by his contemporaries. Among these is a large collection of Vaughan Papers (1949–1952), especially those of Benjamin
Vaughan, a very close friend of Franklin and the first important editor of his writings in English. Like the Hazard Papers (1943), those of Priestley, Price, the Italian scientist, Beccaria (1948), and others, they all throw light on Franklin quite apart from their significance for the history of the period in general.

9. Photostats and microfilms of Frankliniana in American and foreign archives have been diligently sought whenever the originals could not be obtained. In this connection those from abroad are of especial help to the scholar because the originals, scattered here and there in private and public archives, are often difficult of access. Among these are photostats and microfilms from His Majesty's General Register House in Edinburgh, the Royal Society, the British Museum, and other repositories in England; the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Archives des Affaires Étrangères, and other government agencies in Paris; and scattered items from archives and libraries of the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Italy. Through the activities of Dr. Antonio Pace, for example, a considerable number of works about Franklin, and translations of his writings into Italian, have been acquired.

Photoduplicates of collections and individual items here in America are being added continuously to our originals. Significant in this group are the microfilms of the large body of Franklin Correspondence and Papers in the Library of Congress; of Franklin items in the Records of the Continental Congress; of the Franklin-Childs Correspondence at the Century Association; of Franklin items in the libraries of New York and other places.

Note: For a summary of the Library's Franklin program and its relations to the present, see section on Franklin's writings (p. 490).

2.

COLONIAL AND REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY

American colonial history, especially of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the middle colonies, is another field the Library has selected for its purposes. To fairly rich holdings from earlier days a dozen new collections have been added. Among these the following merit special mention:

1. Jeffersoniana. Here, as already noted, the interest has been mainly in materials relating to Jefferson's close associations with the Society as its President for eighteen years, and, in particular, to his active concern for the Library. His gifts to the latter were numerous and important, including the Lewis and Clark Journals, Indian vocabularies and grammars, and many individual items, about which, as noted above, he wrote:

... original manuscripts, many loose sheets, of no use by themselves and in the hands of the holder, but of great value when brought into a general depository. ... 

In response to this spirit, the Library has through the years obtained some of its most priceless individual treasures—the copy of the Declaration of Independence in Jefferson's own hand, William Penn's Charter of Privileges, and, by recent order of the Orphans' Court of Philadelphia, the custody of Franklin's last Will. As to Jeffersoniana there have been added during the decade just passed not only numerous separate items, but a microfilm of the great collection of Jefferson's writings in the Library of Congress (1944) and a considerable collection of pamphlets by gift from John Story Jenks.

2. The Peale-Sellers Papers (1945). These include seventeen letter books, twenty-three diaries, the autobiography, and many individual items of this remarkable artist, who painted so many of his contemporaries, organized the first natural history museum, and served for many years as curator of the Society. Attracted by the original collection and the wide publicity attending publication of the Peale biography by the Society, many items from other members of the Peale-Sellers family have come to the Library. Incidentally, it is worthy of note that as a result of these acquisitions there have been added three valuable volumes to the list of the Society's publications: Charles Willson Peale, 2 v., Memoirs 23 (1–2), 1947; Portraits and Miniatures by Charles Willson Peale, Transactions 42 (1), 1952.

3. In like manner the acquisition (1943) of Dr. Benjamin Rush's Autobiography and Commonplace Book led to the editing and publication in the Society's Memoirs (25) of The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush; his "Travels Through Life" together with his Commonplace Book for 1789–1813, by Dr. George W. Corner. At the same time, Mr. Lyman H. Butterfield, also one of the early Library Research Associates, prepared and edited Letters of Benjamin Rush, 2 v., Memoirs 30 (1–2), for which the rich resources of another great Philadelphia and Franklin institution furnished much of the material.
4. Letters exchanged between George Ord, one time librarian of the Society, and Charles Water- 
ton, 1832–1858 (1942).
5. Additions to the George Hunter Journals purchased in 1940 (1942).
10. The extensive correspondence between William Short and Madame de la Rochefoucauld (1952).
11. A large collection of Shippen Papers, the gift of the Philip H. and A. S. W. Rosenbach Foundation (1952).

12. The beginnings of a series of papers relating to Colonial and Revolutionary history, de- 
posed under an arrangement by the National Park Service.
13. Important additions to the Society’s collection of broadsides.
14. Historic prints, engravings, and etchings, related to Franklin and colonial Philadelphia, especially the more than 200 items presented by the late Adolph G. Rosengarten.
15. Microfilms of Michaux material in French archives, 1,500 frames, acquired (1947) through the cooperation of Dr. Chinard, as were also:
17. Films and photostats from the Royal So- 
ociety relating to the survey of the Mason and Dixon Line.

3. HISTORY OF SCIENCE IN AMERICA

There are a number of cogent reasons for the selection of this field as one of the Library’s major interests. Among them are Franklin’s own in- 
irested in, and contributions to, the subject; the possession of many items rich in association value, and, as in the case of Darwin and evolution, the importance of the subject itself. On the other hand the subject as a whole is altogether too large. Consequently, special areas have been selected in which the Library has a particular interest. Even in these, accessions do not always fall into very distinct categories, although their addition can always be justified on one or another of our criteria for selection. Thus the large collection of papers and correspondence of Elihu Thomson, the gift of the General Electric Co. and Mrs. Thomson, like the diaries of H. H. Donaldson, presented by 
Mrs. Donaldson, reflect the cooperation of mem- 
bers of the Society in depositing selections from among their own papers in the Library. At the same time the half dozen or more collections, noted below as deposited by other institutions or 
individuals not in a position to care for them, reflect the Library’s custodial functions, which usu- 
ally lead to permanent acquisition.
1. The J. Peter Lesley Collection of about 3,000 items, 1838–1893, presented by Charles Lesley Ames (1942).
3. Benjamin Smith Lyman collection of 6,000 items, 1850–1918, deposited by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (1942),
4. Manuscript notes and papers on conchology by Thomas Say, with some drawings by Lesueur (ca. 200 items) (1942).
5. John Lawrence LeConte Papers, 1,500 items, deposited by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (1945).
6. John Warner Papers. Deposited by the 
Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia (1944).
8. The Elihu Thomson Collection, consisting of ca. 35,000 items, presented by Mrs. Thomson and the General Electric Co.
9. Herbert S. Jennings lectures, ca. 100, pre- 
sented by Mrs. Vernon Lynch (1947).
12. Darwin and Evolution. The selection of this particular field in the history of science needs no justification. Like the discoveries in electricity in the exact sciences of Franklin’s day, those by Darwin and his associates have wrought a complete revolution in the natural sciences. We were therefore very fortunate in acquiring at auction
(1950) a large and important collection of original correspondence by Darwin and his scientific contemporaries on the inception and development of this movement:

a. The correspondence between Charles Darwin and Sir Charles Lyell during the years 1837–1874, consisting of more than 400 letters, 179 by Darwin to Lyell, and 278 by other eminent scientists—Forbes, Herschel, Humboldt, Huxley, Murchison, Owen, Wallace, and others.

b. A collection of 167 holograph letters by Darwin and fellow scientists, assembled by Lady Lyell, with photographs of the writers.

c. Darwin correspondence with G. K. Thwaites, botanist in India; the French scientist, Romanes (87 pieces); and Quatrefages.

d. Individual Darwin letters, mostly unpublished.

e. Microfilms of the large body of Darwin correspondence, etc., at Down House, Kent, England, acquired with the cooperation of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

f. Photostats or microfilms of letters exchanged between Darwin and Americans, reflecting the reception of the doctrine of evolution by scientists in this country.

g. Basic works published by precursors or contemporaries of Darwin. In this field the holdings of some of the older libraries in the Philadelphia area are surprisingly rich and are, of course, always considered in order to avoid unnecessary duplication.

4.

AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGES, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND ETHNOLOGY

This field was chosen for several important reasons, among which is the presence in the Library of important holdings of early years, acquired through Thomas Jefferson, Cadwallader Colden, Peter Du Ponceau, and others; the special bequest by Henry Phillips, Jr., later enlarged by the family, for the purchase of books in these subjects; the presentation by the American Council of Learned Societies of a large body of field notes, reports, memoranda, accumulated by the Committee on American Native Languages under the direction of the late Dr. Franz Boas, member of Society, as well as the gift by the family of Dr. Boas of his personal correspondence and papers; and finally the opinion of a committee of specialists that the study of American Indian life and culture, particularly of the woodlands area of northeastern America, called for more intensive research than heretofore.

The condition governing the use of the Phillips Fund being open to various interpretations in the light of present day conditions, opinion of counsel was sought. Broadly interpreted, the meaning of the word “book” was accepted to include all material expressions of thought, whether manuscript, printed works, photographic reproductions, recordings, etc. With this in mind, the Chairman organized an advisory committee to consider the particular fields which the Society might profitably develop. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Lydenberg, the committee, consisting largely of experts, made a preliminary survey, not only of our holdings and facilities, but of those of other libraries. As a result, a carefully worked out plan for the development of the Library in this field was submitted to the Library Committee for adoption. It suggests four major lines of activity:

The first calls for an intensive exploitation of the Boas Collection. The second involves the assumption by the Library, under the guidance of the Committee, of a special interest and responsibility for American Indian languages in the eastern part of the United States. The third covers a preliminary survey of the collections in the field of Indian languages, with a view to a catalogue of holdings in this area; and the fourth, a survey of the present status of research and investigation in the field, and an up-to-date edition of Pilling’s Proof sheets of a bibliography of the languages of North American Indians (Washington, 1885).

In general, this has been the framework within which the American Indian program has been implemented. I say in general, because the Committee also recommended the continuation of research and study in related areas, especially in subjects represented in the Library’s own holdings and which, so far as the Boas Collection is concerned, frequently relate to activities quite outside the eastern woodlands.

5.

RARE BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, AND BROADSIDES

The field of rare books, like a number of others, has never been systematically cultivated by our Library. Nevertheless, its collection is very considerable and excellent in quality. Accession records reveal many valuable items that go back to Franklin himself. However, despite the fact that the Library houses the bulk of the writings of the peer among American printers, and the pub-
lishers of what are today rare books like the superb edition of Logan's translation of Cicero's *Cato Major*, growth in this field has been irregular and inconsistent. The field was therefore chosen as one that the Library could develop under its own program, and additions have been consistently made during the past decade. They range all the way from the *de luxe* edition of Franklin's *Book of Constitutions* (Paris, 1783) to much sought after first editions of the works of Darwin and his precursors.

On the other hand, the criteria of selection have deviated somewhat from the usual in that the importance of books in the history of thought has been given special weight in determining our choice, and since dynamic books, that is works of great influence, usually become rare, the element of greatness is added to that of rareness, suggesting a modification of the rubric "Rare Books" to "Rare Editions of Great Books." As such they are kept under lock and key, but available under certain restrictions for the use of scholars. For prolonged use microfilms or photostats are ordered. In other words, the Library's rare books are in restricted circulation and not just museum rarities. They are repaired, processed and given the same scrupulous care as our most highly prized and valued manuscripts.

Meanwhile it has been forcibly brought to the attention of the Committee that some of the priceless collections of rare books in this city are in great need of better housing and care. With this in mind, it was decided that the Committee enter into negotiations with representatives of other institutions for a study of the situation, with a view to establishing here in historic Philadelphia a great rare book center adequately housed and serviced in the Society's Library.

**TOOLS FOR LIBRARY RESEARCH**

With the development of the Library's original source materials in these and other fields, the necessity of adding the standard secondary works, guides, bibliographies, etc., was obvious. Libraries such as ours cannot depend on the facilities of universities and colleges, and it is the lack of such a relationship that creates one of the major problems of a highly specialized library. This, together with inadequate funds and tools, accounts for the very unsatisfactory and hit-or-miss equipment of the Library in the past. Several methods of overcoming the handicap have been developed, among which the cooperation of members of the Society interested in the Library, and the system of Library Research Associateships described below proved the most effective.

**STUDY OF THE LIBRARY'S HOLDINGS; DISPOSA L OF UNRELATED MATERIALS AND DUPLICATES**

Following the suggestions of the Special Report, a rigorous review of holdings was promptly inaugurated and carried on more or less intermittently during the entire decade, as relief from the pressure of other work afforded the time. The results appear not only in the reduction of the number of exchanges, but in their quality and character.

1. Exchanges. In the course of a few years the system of the Society's exchanges was thoroughly overhauled, in cooperation with Dr. Eisenhart and Dr. Schramm, Chairmen of the two Committees particularly concerned with certain aspects of the problem. Under a very unsystematic program of exchanges, the number of accessions of periodicals and serials had reached the alarming proportions which had led to the Special Committee's recommendation to "reduce drastically the number of continuations of serials." Under this mandate, more than 240 foreign and 120 domestic institutions and organizations were eliminated from the Society's exchange list. Relatively few have been added, the selection being always based on the new policy adopted in consultation with the Committee on Publications.

2. Other Irrelevant and Duplicate Material. Weeding out holdings of this character has and is being continued with the aid and advice of members of the Society in particular fields, and with due consideration for the holdings in other libraries in the Philadelphia area. More than 6,000 volumes, many of them serials of recent origin, have been disposed of by gift, sale or exchange. About $14,000 has been realized from sales, and considerable good will established with institutions that have benefited by our policy of placing serials and duplicates where they are particularly needed.

3. Large Collections Unrelated to the Library's Program, but acquired in the earlier years under restricted deeds of gift, have presented special problems. The pages of the Montezuma's *Tribute Roll* were returned to Mexico as a gesture of friendship in connection with the dedication of the Benjamin Franklin Library in Mexico City. In the case of the amazing collection on the history of
the Scaliger family from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, the portraits were presented by the Society to the City of Verona and are now in the Museo Civico of that city, but the manuscripts—7 boxes and a large package of parchments—are in our Library. On the other hand, manuscript records of the "Inquisicion de Barcelona," during the second half of the sixteenth century onward, have been in the Library since the '40's of the last century, valuable original materials for the historian of the Spanish Inquisition, our fellow member, Henry C. Lea. An integral part of the collections in the Henry C. Lea Library of the University of Pennsylvania, they should obviously be deposited there.

USE OF THE LIBRARY, RESEARCH, AND PUBLICATIONS

Since specialized libraries are of necessity used only by specialists and serious students, it is significant that the number of readers during the decade has more than trebled. At the beginning of the decade, however, the mandate of the Special Committee to “make the Library known . . .” aroused a variety of conjectures as to procedure. Obviously libraries do not advertise. They attract by their holdings, working conditions, and the service they offer. While our Library could be brought to the attention of members of the Society in different ways, it was clear that it would best become known to the scholarly world in general through publication of its own holdings, or studies based upon them. What is more important, however, is the fact that the scholarly publications by the Research Associates of Library materials, and studies based on them, have been quite exceptional both in quality and quantity. Altogether five such volumes have been published in the Society’s Memoir series, including two by the late Carl Van Doren. More than forty articles have appeared in the Bulletin or Proceedings. To these should be added half a dozen by the Chairman in other scholarly journals, in particular “The Library of the American Philosophical Society” in the William and Mary Quarterly. In 1951 Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London carried a summary of work by Professor Thomas D. Cope and H. W. Robinson. Since 1948 one number of the Proceedings annually has been devoted to “Studies of historical documents in the Library of the American Philosophical Society” and been reissued separately as the Library Bulletin: Notes and Historical Documents and widely distributed among libraries. By means of these publications, added to the Annual Report of the Library in the Year Book, the Special Committee’s charge that “an obligation rests upon the Society to make known the contents of the Library . . .” is being met in a dignified and effective manner.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER LIBRARIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE OF THE PHILADELPHIA METROPOLITAN AREA

This has been one of the very fruitful and satisfactory parts of the program. Through Mrs. Hess’s effective work as secretary of the Union Library Catalogue of the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area, our policy of accessions and exchange of holdings with other libraries has been carefully developed to the advantage of all concerned. We have established a mutual understanding with the University Library and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on Americana, and a system of exchange with the Academy of Natural Sciences, by which manuscript collections, pertinent to our work, are placed on more or less permanent deposit with us, and so made available for scholarly use.

Friendly relations with special libraries at home and abroad have been established, the most recent being the cooperation with the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Massachusetts Historical Society, and the Adams Manuscript Trust to make the Adams papers available for scholarship.

PROCESSING, CATALOGUING, AND SERVICE

In this respect the latest approved methods in library administration have, with one or two exceptions, been introduced.

1. **Processing, Repairing, etc.** Important documents are microfilmed, repaired, bound, or placed in marked folders and boxed. Especially significant items are, as a rule, filmed again after they have been repaired. All repair work on manuscripts and rare books is now done in the library by Willman Spawn in an improvised workshop at the north end of the stacks. The quality of the workmanship is second to none.

2. **Storage and Shelving** of manuscripts and rare books present an extremely serious problem because of the overcrowding and security hazards in our vaults, a situation which should not be longer overlooked. The use of microfilms and microcards as means of controlling the shelving and storage problem is being investigated.

3. **Photoduplication.** The possibilities in the use of microfilms and photostats are particularly important in the control of relatively less important and bulky materials—serials, newspapers, etc. This also promises to eliminate much of the Library's annual bill for binding, quite apart from shelving and upkeep. According to the report of the Special Committee, "each volume costs over $2.00 for binding and cataloging, to which must be added 13-1/2¢ annually for shelving space for evermore." Today the cost is considerably higher. According to *University Microfilms* (1952), the total cost including "amortization of building, shelving, maintenance, heat, light, etc.," amounts approximately to 20¢ per volume each year. Moreover, since bound periodicals are usually large, they call for double the space of ordinary books, making the cost per annum more nearly 40¢ per volume. Through exchanges and subscriptions, our Library shelves more than a thousand serials which, on the cost of maintenance just referred to, involve an annual outlay of $400, exclusive of interest, or $2,200 cumulatively for the decade. Our having discarded 600 serials has therefore resulted in a considerable saving. On the other hand, many of our serials are essential to our policy and cannot be eliminated. The obvious solution lies in substituting microfilms in cases of serials of minor importance without association value. Fortunately, provisions for this are now at hand and arrangements on an experimental basis are being tried. By these means the accepted system of preserving more or less bulky holdings such as newspapers and serials will, it is hoped, be completely revolutionized, if not abandoned for all but exceptionally worth while numbers. The newer type of reading machine offers an enlarged and clear transparency and many readers prefer to work with it, using the original only for additional checking. Incidentally the adoption of these new techniques—photoduplication, recordings on tape or discs—presents problems for the staff that call for considerable time and study, not to mention adaptability and frequently *ad hoc* provisions. Routine training in library schools has not caught up with actual progress in this respect.

**THE PROBLEM OF HOUSING**

The need of a permanent home for its Library has been a major objective of the Society from the beginning. This was again brought out by the Special Committee: "An office building is always an uncertain habitation, and an increased use of the library, resulting in making its contents known, may," it says, "lead the officers of the Society to consideration of a separate building."

1. **Temporary.** With the completion of Philosophical Hall in 1789, a permanent home was apparently assured. The phenomenal growth of libraries, however, was not envisaged by the Founders. As was the case with most libraries, the old quarters in the Hall gradually became so inadequate that something had to be done, and in 1890 the incongruous third story was unfortunately superimposed on the modest colonial home of the Society. Even from the point of view of affording more space, it soon proved unsatisfactory, and in 1934 the Library was moved into the Drexel Building. In 1949 the third story of Philosophical Hall was taken down to restore it to its original appearance and again bring it into harmony with the other buildings in the Square. Meanwhile, the new quarters of the Library, which from the first were regarded as temporary, were becoming more and more inadequate. Today the vaults for our priceless manuscripts and rare books are over-crowded to overflowing, extremely difficult to service, and exposed to unwarranted hazards. In the face of these things, and with the prospect of demolition of the Drexel Building itself in the near future, the need for temporary housing of the Library is pressing. Fortunately, the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Building across Library Street, which is both modern in construction and fireproof, is available.

2. **Permanent.** Meanwhile the permanent home seems now to be assured in a manner little dreamed of a decade ago. As the plans for the National Independence Historical Park took shape, the modified reconstruction on its original site of the
The attractive Georgian building of the Old Library Company of Philadelphia (fig. 8), built by Franklin and his friends, seemed to offer a logical solution to our Library's problem. Although too ambitious to meet with general acceptance at first, it gradually found favor, and at the Annual Meeting of 1951 the Council and the Society formally endorsed the recommendation to build "Library Hall" intrusting the drafting of the petition for the lot to the Committee on Library. At the suggestion of the Advisory Commission on the Independence National Historical Park, the request was incorporated in a bill known as H. R. 6544, 82nd Congress, 2nd session, February 11, 1952. Passed by both Houses of Congress, it was signed by the President in July 1952. The site for the Society's new library and the privilege to build Library Hall are therefore confirmed by federal law.

The pertinent section of the Act reads:

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to permit the American Philosophical Society, a nonprofit corporation, without cost to the United States, to construct, operate and maintain in the park a building to be located on approximately the original site of historic Library Hall to house the library of the American Philosophical Society and any additions to said library, such permission to be granted the society pursuant to a lease, contract, or authorization without charge, on such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Secretary and accepted by the society, and for such length of time as the society shall continue to use the said building for the housing, display, and use of a library and scientific and historical collections:

Provided, That the plans for the construction of the building and any additions thereto shall be approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

The generous response of the national government to the Society's proposal to extend its scientific and cultural activities here in old Philadelphia is a flattering recognition of the significance of the presence here, amid the many historic sites and buildings, of a live scholarly and scientific organization so closely associated with the great events of our national history.

Fortunately the Building Fund started by bequests of far-seeing members has been scrupulously guarded, and more than a million and a half dollars are now available for the construction and equipment of Library Hall.

In its study of the situation, the Committee and the officers have been mindful not only of the fact that the site is conveniently located across the street from Philosophical Hall, but also that Li-
Library Hall of the Old Library Company (fig. 9) formed an attractive link architecturally between the Independence Square group of buildings and Carpenters' Hall. In order to recapture the simplicity and charm of this part of old Philadelphia, the façade of the Library on the Fifth Street side is planned to conform with the original building, while the south elevation on Library Street (fig. 10) is to be integrated with the old Custom House, Carpenters' Hall, and other historic survivals in this part of the Independence National Historical Park. The interior, apart from the historic reading room which will repeat the main features of the old Library, is to be thoroughly up-to-date, fire and dust proof, and air conditioned, with special research facilities to emphasize Franklin's intuitive respect for the dynamic force of ideas and the records of civilization preserved in libraries and archives. What modifications of the plans will be made in response to the proposed liaison for the housing and servicing of other Philadelphia collections is, of course, subject to careful study by the Society.

FRANKLIN'S WRITINGS

To live up to the character of its Founder, however, the American Philosophical Society cannot rest satisfied even with a new and up-to-date library and the accumulation of Franklin's writings, however thorough the search for these may be. Dead archives are not in the Franklin tradition. Manuscripts, books, and libraries are the custodians of ideas—the dynamics of progress. To continue dynamic they must circulate. The publication of Franklin's writings is a necessary complement to their accession and preservation. As such, this has also been a major objective of the Library's policy during the decade just passed. The publications vary in form from selected letters, edited by recognized Franklin scholars, and published by the Society, to research studies and articles on special aspects of Franklin's life, published in the Library Bulletin and other scholarly magazines.

At the same time the Library has in recent years carried on intensive work on the revision of its catalogue of Frankliniana, and made a fair start on a check list of Franklin materials in other re-
repositories. With the aid of the latter we are assembling a collection of photo-duplicates of known Franklin items to supplement our own originals, and establishing the Library as a clearing house for all Frankliniana.

More specifically the response to the Society's mandate to develop Frankliniana, as the field for which it assumes responsibility above all others, can be summarized as follows:

1. Constant search for and acquisition of original Franklin writings—manuscript and printed—in this country and abroad.

2. Photo-copies when originals could not be acquired, including Frankliniana in other institutions and in private hands.

3. Microfilming of all our own Frankliniana for security and service purposes.

4. Acquisition of significant Frankliniana—published works, primary or secondary; memorabilia, including works of art; and tools for research.

5. Developing a checklist or catalogue of all Frankliniana as far as they are available.

6. Program of publication: (a) of collections of Franklin's writings associated with certain persons or events, which give them a unity of their own; (b) of studies of particular aspects of Franklin's life and activities.

7. Meanwhile a general desire for a major publication of Franklin's writings has also been under serious consideration. Strongly urged by the National Historical Publications Commission and a considerable number of the Society's own membership, it is accepted that a comprehensive edition of Franklin's writings is a first desideratum of American scholarship, as far as documentary publications are concerned. In anticipation of the 250th anniversary of Franklin's birth, considerable discussion of the possibility of the Society's assuming responsibility for a new edition of Franklin's writings developed, opinion strongly favoring an exploratory study as a first step. Meanwhile new and very interesting developments for a major edition of the writings have occurred which give promise of quite exceptional institutional and editorial cooperation.

By its active promotion of the study and publication of its materials, and bringing them to the attention of scholars, the Library is making its collections live. They are not just dead archives. They are alive and dynamic, as the Founders meant them to be. In a letter from Monticello on November 7, 1817 to Peter Du Ponceau concerning the presentation to the Library of the Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Thomas Jefferson wrote:

... With respect to the zoological, vegetable and mineralogical papers, I suggest it would perhaps be agreeable to the Philosophical Society to have a digest of them made, and published in their transactions or otherwise, and if it should be within the views of the historical committee to have the Indian vocabularies digested and published, I would add to them the remains of my collection. I had thro' the course of my life availed myself of every opportunity of procuring vocabularies of the languages of every tribe which either myself or my friends could have access to. They amounted to about 40 more or less perfect. But in their passage from Washington to this place, the trunk in which they were was stolen and plundered, and some fragments only of the vocabularies were recovered. . . .

Like Franklin, Jefferson regarded the Library not only as a proper depository for great historical and scientific materials, but as an institution with

responsibilities for their study and publication. With this in mind, the Library Committee in the decade just passed has given much time and attention to what would, in Libraries other than highly specialized ones, be regarded as extra-curricular. In focusing acquisitions around selected subjects and special fields, it has brought a certain preeminence to the Library, especially in Frankliniana, in which during the last twelve months there have been acquired two important collections, and a number of rare individual items. While this study has been in preparation, Franklin’s famous and oft-quoted last Will (figs. 11 and 12) has come to the Library from the Register of Wills, Mr. Joseph D. Burke, by Decree of His Hon. Charles Klein of the Orphans’ Court pursuant to Act of Assembly No. 432 of 1951. Preserved in the office of the Register of Wills for more than one hundred and sixty years, it will now be on exhibition by the Society under specified conditions.

Fig. 12. Franklin’s will.